

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 01819 060957Z

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14

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R 060910Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7937

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1819

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MOPS, LA, TH

SUBJECT: REPORTED PL/NVA MENACE TO THAILAND (U)

1. (U) SUMMARY: WHILE THERE ARE PL/NVA UNITS OPERATING IN THE LAO-THAI BORDER AREA, THESE FORCES DO NOT REPRESENT THE THREAT DEPICTED IN RECENT THAI NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

2. (U) RECENT ARTICLES IN THE BANGKOK POST HAVE CLAIMED THAT THAILAND IS BEING MENACED BY A MASSIVE BUILD UP OF COMMUNIST FORCES IN LAOS. U.S. MISSION LAOS FEELS THAT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO IT MAY BE OF VALUE IN CLARIFYING THE SITUATION.

3. (C) A PL COMPANY POLITICAL OFFICER IN JUNE 1973 INDICATED THAT THE NVA INTENDED A TENFOLD INFILTRATION INTO THAILAND. HOWEVER, THIS OFFICE HAS NO INFORMATION TO INDICATE THAT THERE HAS BEEN ANY RECENT INCREASE IN CT INFILTRATION.

4. (C) THE BORDER AREA BETWEEN THE PAK KADING AND HIN BOUN RIVERS IS THE AREA MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED IN THE BANGKOK POST ARTICLES. THE PL/NVA DO HAVE UNITS ALONG THE MEKONG IN THIS SECTION. THERE HAS BEEN AN INDICATION OF AN INCREASE IN THE RESUPPLY ACTIVITY TO THESE UNITS. AN UNKNOWN PERCENTAGE OF THIS SUPPLY VOLUME IS PROBABLY ASSOCIATED WITH ONGOING CONSTRUCTION
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PAGE 02 VIENTI 01819 060957Z

AND ROAD BUILDING ACTIVITIES. THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION OF AN

INCREASE IN THE LOGISTIC SUPPORT TO CT UNITS ON THE THAI SIDE OF THE MEKONG; HOWEVER, WE HAVE HAD NO SOURCES WHO WERE KNOWLEDGE-ABLE CONCERNING CT INFILTRATION DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS.

5. (C) WE HAVE NO INFORMATION TO SUBSTANTIATE NEWSPAPER REPORTS CONCERNING A PL/NVA BUILD UP ALONG ANY PORTION OF THE THAI-LAO BORDER SINCE APPROX. AUGUST 1973; THE LAST SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN NVA/PL TROOP DEPLOYMENT OCCURRED BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND AUGUST 1973 WHEN PL/NVA UNITS ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN NEWLY WON TERRITORY ALONG THE MEKONG BETWEEN THE PAK KADING AND HIN BOUN RIVERS. PL UNITS IN THIS AREA ARE CURRENTLY REORGANIZING AND THIS MAY HAVE LED TO SOME DOUBLE COUNTING AND HENCE ERRONEOUS INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF BATTALIONS IN THE AREA.

6. (C) CURRENTLY WE BELIEVE THAT IN THE PAK KADING-THAKHEK AREA THE ENEMY HAS TWO PL BNS AND NO MORE THAN TWO OR THREE NVA BNS. IN ADDITION, THE 26TH COMBINED NVA/PL BN OPERATES IN THIS AREA AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING INFILTRATION-EXFILTRATION SUPPORT TO CTS.

7. (C) IN SHORT, WHILE THERE ARE APPROX. NINE PL OR NVA BATTALIONS NORMALLY OPERATIONAL WITHIN 12-15 KMS OF THE LAO/THAI BORDER, WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT THAILAND IS BEING MENACED BY "25 BATTALIONS OF COMMUNIST REGULAR TROOPS...MASSING ALONG THE MEKONG". ALL OF THE UNITS WHICH WE INDICATE IN THE BORDER AREA WERE THERE PRIOR TO AUGUST 1973. GDS 31 DEC 80
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